



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MEDIA CONTACTS

Jared Touchin | 928.221.9253
Jolene Holgate | 928.380.4174
Chrissy Largo | 928.637.5603
nnlb.communications@gmail.com

Law and Order Committee receives update on the Dilkon justice center

LEUPP, Ariz. – On Monday, the Law and Order Committee received a report from the Navajo Nation Division of Public Safety, Judicial Branch, Design and Engineering representatives, Department of Justice, Office of Contracts and Grants, and the Office of Management and Budget, regarding the status of the Dilkon justice center.

According to the report, Navajo Nation Design and Engineering project manager Scott House said the development of the proposed Dilkon justice center is experiencing grant funding issues which is affecting the planning and design of the building.

“We received a grant in the amount of \$150,000 from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009,” said House. “It was leftover money from the Tuba City judicial center, and we transferred that remaining grant to the Dilkon project.”

House clarified that the grant funding for the design of the Dilkon justice center is set to expire on March 31 and hopes to receive an extension to expend the entirety of the funds. The initial deadline passed in Sept. 2013 and was extended for an additional six months.

The U.S. Department of Justice awarded the Navajo Nation the ARRA funds to be allocated for infrastructure improvement and development, enhance energy independence, expand educational opportunities, etc. that relate to judicial and criminal justice programs in the Nation.

LOC vice chair Council Delegate Alton Joe Shepherd (Jeddito, Cornfields, Ganado, Kin Dah Lichii, Steamboat) expressed his concern regarding the upcoming grant deadline and suggested that a deadline extension be requested from the U.S. DOJ.

“We need to find a way to get the funds and deadline extended, we do not want to lose out on any external funding for this project,” said Delegate Shepherd.

House explained to committee members that the Dilkon justice center would need an additional \$39 million to complete the design, engineering, and construction of the facility, adding that it is time to begin seeking funds for construction after the planning and design phases are completed.

Delegate Shepherd said the procurement process for design, engineering, bidding, and construction need to be made simpler due to issues that arise with funding and deadlines,

especially in regards to the disbursement process of the Navajo Nation OMB, and the Office of the Controller.

“I think we as lawmakers need to amend the procurement process to rectify the issues we run into when it comes to capital projects,” said Delegate Shepherd. “We have to find a more streamlined process to ensure these projects do not run into any more obstacles.”

LOC members voted 2-0 to accept the report.

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